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PATENT

COVERING FOR FLOWER POT AND FLORAL GROUPING

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. Serial No. 10/322,183, filed December 16, 2002, now abandoned, which is a continuation of U.S. Serial No. 10/147,799, filed May 14, 2002, now U.S. Patent No. 6,499,253; which is a continuation of U.S. Serial No. 09/933,384, filed August 20, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,418,662; which is a continuation of U.S. Serial No. 09/767,518, filed January 23, 2001, now abandoned; which is a continuation of U.S. Serial No. 09/353,850, filed July 15, 1999, now U.S. Patent No. 6,192,625; which is a continuation of U.S. Serial No. 08/971,206, filed November 14, 1997, now U.S. Patent No. 5,956,898; which is a continuation of 08/526,335 filed September 11, 1995, now U.S. Patent No. 5,699,648; which is a continuation of U.S. Serial No. 08/183,010, filed January 14, 1994, now U.S. Patent No. 5,479,758; which is a continuation of U.S. Serial No. 08/001,001, filed January 6, 1993, now U.S. Patent No. 5,307,606. Each of the above applications is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates generally to coverings for flower pots and, more particularly, but not by way of limitation, to a covering for a flower pot having a sheet extension for extending about a floral grouping disposed in the flower pot.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0003] Figure 1 is a plan view of a sheet of material with a sheet extension connected thereto constructed in accordance with the present invention.

[0004] Figure 2 is a perspective view of a flower pot having a floral grouping disposed therein.

[0005] Figure 3 is a perspective view of the sheet of material formed into a pot cover with the sheet extension connected thereto.

[0006] Figure 4 is a perspective view showing the flower pot of Figure 2 disposed in the pot cover of Figure 3 with the sheet extension formed about the floral grouping.

[0007] Figure 5 is plan view of a modified sheet of material with a modified sheet extension connected thereto.

[0008] Figure 6 is a perspective view of the sheet of material of Figure 5 formed into a pot cover and having the flower pot of Figure 2 disposed in the pot cover with the sheet extension formed about the floral grouping.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0009] Referring to Figure 1, as shown therein and designated by the general reference numeral 10 is a sheet of material constructed in accordance with the present invention. The sheet of material 10 shown in Figure 1 has an upper surface 12, a lower surface 14 (Figure 3), a first end 16, a second end 18, a first side 20 and a second side 22. The ends 16 and 18 cooperate with the sides 20 and 22 to define an outer perimeter 24 of the sheet of material 10. The outer perimeter 24 of the sheet of material 10 is defined by perforations 26, as shown in Figures 1, 3 and 4.

[0010] As shown in Figures 1, 3 and 4, a sheet extension 28 is connected to the outer perimeter 24 of the sheet of material 10. As shown in Figures 1 and 3, the sheet extension 28 extends a distance outwardly from the outer perimeter 24 of the sheet of material 10. The sheet extension 28 has a first end 30, a second end 32, a first side 34 and a second side 36. A portion of the sheet extension 28 extends a distance outwardly from the first end 16 of the sheet of material 10 terminating with the first end 30 of the sheet extension 28. Another portion of the sheet extension 28 extends a distance outwardly from the second end 18 of the sheet of material 10 terminating with the second end 32 of the sheet extension 28. Yet another portion of the sheet extension 28 extends a distance outwardly from the first side 20 of the sheet of material 10 terminating with the first side 34 of the sheet extension 28. Still another portion of the sheet extension 28 extends a distance outwardly from the second side 22 of the sheet of material 10 terminating with the second side 36 of the sheet extension 28.

[0011] The sheet extension 28 cooperates with the sheet of material 10 to define a generally square or rectangularly shaped sheet of material with the perforations 26 being disposed in a central portion of the sheet of material and defining the outer perimeter 24 of the sheet of material 10. Preferably, the sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 are unitary and formed from a single sheet or plies or multiple sheets one on top of the other which may or may not be laminated.

[0012] The sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 are constructed from any suitable flexible material that is capable of being wrapped about a floral grouping and formed into a covering, as described herein. Preferably, the sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 are constructed

of a material selected from a group of materials consisting of paper, metal foil, cloth (natural or synthetic), including denim, and burlap or polymeric film or combinations thereof.

[0013] The term "polymeric film" as used herein means a synthetic or a natural polymeric film. For example, but not by way of limitation, one polymeric film is a polypropylene film. Another example of a polymeric film, but not by way of limitation, is cellophane.

[0014] The sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 have a thickness in a range from about 0.1 mil to about 30 mils. Preferably, the sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 have a thickness in a range from about 0.1 mil to about 5 mils.

[0015] The sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 may be any shape and a rectangular shape is shown in Figure 1 only by way of example. The sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 for example only may be square, rectangular, circular or any other geometric shape such as heart shaped for example only.

[0016] The sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 may be constructed of a single layer of material or a plurality of layers of the same or different types of materials. Any thickness of the sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 may be utilized in accordance with the present invention as long as the sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 are wrappable about a floral grouping and formable into a covering, as described herein. The layers of material comprising the sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 may be connected together or laminated or may be separate layers.

[0017] The covering of the present invention is particularly constructed to be used with a pot 38 (Figure 2). The pot 38 has a top 40, a bottom 42 with

an opening through the top 40 forming a receiving space 44 within the pot 38. The pot 38 also has an outer peripheral surface 46. As shown in Figure 2, the pot 38 is generally cylindrically shaped. However, the pot 38 may be any shape as may be desired in a particular application.

[0018] A floral grouping 48 is disposed at least partially within the receiving space 44 of the pot 38, as shown in Figure 2. The floral grouping 48 has a stem end 50 and a bloom end 52. In one embodiment as shown in Figure 2, material such as soil 54 is disposed in the receiving space 44 and a portion of the stem end 50 extends into the soil 54. The floral grouping 48 extends a distance upwardly from the top 40 of the pot 38 terminating with the bloom end 52.

[0019] "Floral grouping" as used herein means cut fresh flowers, artificial flowers, a single flower, other fresh and/or artificial plants or other floral materials and may include other secondary plants and/or ornamentation which add to the aesthetics of the overall floral grouping.

[0020] A decorative pattern, such as a color and/or an embossed pattern, and/or other decorative surface ornamentation may be applied to the upper surface 12 and/or the lower surface 14 of the sheet of material 10 or portions thereof including, but not limited to printed design, coatings, colors, flocking or metallic finishes. The sheet of material 10 also may be totally or partially clear or tinted transparent material. The sheet extension 28 is transparent, although a decorative pattern also may be applied to the sheet extension 28.

[0021] The sheet of material 10 with the sheet extension 28 connected thereto is placed between a male and a female die or other forming system (not shown) and formed into a pot cover 56 (Figures 3 and 4). As shown in Figures 3 and 4, the pot cover 56 has a top 58, a closed bottom 60 and a cover opening

62 (Figure 3) formed through the top 58 and extending through the top 58 a distance toward the bottom 60 of the pot cover 56 providing a pot receiving space 64 (Figure 3). The pot receiving space 64 is shaped and adapted to receive the pot 38. The pot cover 56 has a lower portion 65 and an upper sleeve portion 71 (Figure 4).

[0022] The pot cover 56 has a plurality of overlapping folds 66 with each of the overlapping folds 66 extending at various distances and at various angles over an outer peripheral surface 68 of the pot cover 56 extending between the top 58 and the bottom 60. The overlapping folds 66 extend at various angles and over various distance over the outer peripheral surface 68.

[0023] The lower portion 65 of the pot cover 56 includes a base portion 67 and a skirt portion 70. The base portion 67 has an upper end 69 and is dimensioned to encompass at least a portion of the outer peripheral surface 46 of the pot 38 when the pot 38 is disposed in the pot receiving space 64 of the pot cover 56 (Figures 3 and 4). The skirt portion 70 extends from the upper end 69 of the base portion 67 radially outwardly with an outer perimeter 76 of the skirt portion 70 being formed by the outer perimeter 24 of the sheet of material 10. The perforations 26 extend along the outer perimeter 76 of the skirt portion 70 formed by the outer perimeter 24 of the sheet of material 10.

[0024] The overlapping folds 66 may be connected or at least partially connected. The connection of the overlapping folds 66 may be accomplished by using heat sealing material and heat sealing the overlapping folds 66 or by adhesively or cohesively connecting the overlapping folds 66.

[0025] A pot cover constructed in the manner just described with respect to the pot cover 56 and a system for forming such a pot cover is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 4,773,182, entitled, Article Forming System, issued to Weder,

et al, September 27, 1988, and the disclosure of this patent specifically hereby is incorporated herein by reference.

[0026] The pot 38 is placed in the pot receiving space 64 and positioned in the pot cover 56 such that the bottom 42 of the pot 38 is disposed generally adjacent the bottom 60 of the pot cover 56. The base portion 67 of the pot cover 56 substantially encompasses the entire outer peripheral surface 46 of the pot 38 including the bottom 42. The base portion 67 of the pot cover 56 extends from the bottom 42 to the top 40 of the pot 38. The skirt portion 70 extends radially outwardly from the upper end 69 of the base portion 67.

[0027] After the pot 38 has been placed in the pot cover 56, the sheet extension 28 forms the upper sleeve portion 71 (Figure 4) which is formed about the floral grouping 48 to a position wherein the upper sleeve portion 71 covers and encompasses a substantial portion of the floral grouping 48 including the bloom end 52 of the floral grouping 48.

[0028] The upper sleeve portion 71 preferably includes a bonding material 72 (Figure 1) disposed on an upper surface 73 of the upper sleeve portion 71 and extending about an outer perimeter 76 of the upper sleeve portion 71. After the upper sleeve portion 71 has been formed about the floral grouping 48, the outer perimeter 76 of the upper sleeve portion 71 is bonded together to provide a closed end 74 of the upper sleeve portion 71 of the pot cover 56 (Figure 4).

[0028a] The base portion 67 and the skirt portion 70 of the lower portion 65 together have an outer surface area 80 which is less than an outer surface area 82 of the upper sleeve portion 71 (Figure 4).

[0029] The term "bonding material" as used herein means an adhesive, preferably a pressure sensitive adhesive, or a cohesive. Where the bonding

material is a cohesive, a similar cohesive material must be placed on the adjacent surface for bondingly contacting and bondingly engaging with the cohesive material. The term "bonding material" also includes materials which are heat sealable and, in this instance, the adjacent portions of the material must be brought into contact and then heat must be applied to effect the seal. The term "bonding material" as used herein also means a heat sealing lacquer which may be applied to the sheet of material and, in this instance, heat also must be applied to effect the sealing. The term "bonding material" as used herein means any type of material or thing which can be used to effect the bonding or connecting of the two adjacent portions of the material or sheet of material to effect the connection or bonding described herein. The term "bonding material" also includes labels, bands, ribbons, strings, tape, staples or combinations thereof.

[0030] The sheet extension 28 remains in a position extending about the floral grouping 48 until it is desired to remove the sheet extension 28. The sheet extension 28 is removed from the pot cover 56 by tearing along the perforations 26, thereby separating the sheet extension 28 from the pot cover 56. The sheet extension 28 then is removed from the floral grouping 48 providing a decorative cover (not shown) for the pot 38.

[0031] In addition to the perforations 26, the upper sleeve portion 71 also may include perforations extending between the perforations 26 and the outer perimeter 76 of the upper sleeve portion 71 to further assist in the removal of the upper sleeve portion 71 when it is no longer desired to keep the upper sleeve portion 71 extending about the floral grouping 48.

[0032] Embodiment of Figures 5 and 6

[0033] Shown in Figures 5 and 6 is a sheet of material 10a having a sheet extension 28a connected thereto. The sheet of material 10a and the sheet extension 28a are constructed exactly like the sheet of material 10 and the sheet extension 28 shown in Figures 1, 3 and 4 and described in detail before, except the sheet of material 10a is circularly shaped having a circularly shaped outer perimeter 24a and the sheet extension 28a is circularly shaped having a circularly shaped outer perimeter 76a.

[0034] The sheet of material 10a is formed into a pot cover 56a having a lower portion 65a comprising a base portion 67a (Figure 6) in a manner exactly like that described before with respect to the pot cover 56 (Figures 3 and 4), except the lower portion 65a of the pot cover 56a has a skirt portion 70a with a circularly shaped appearance and a circularly shaped outer perimeter 76a defined by the circularly shaped outer perimeter 24a of the sheet of material 10a. The sheet extension 28a forms an upper sleeve portion 71a of the pot cover 56a which extends a distance outwardly from the skirt portion 70a and also has a circularly shaped outer perimeter 76a, as mentioned before.

[0034a] The base portion 67a and the skirt portion 70a of the lower portion 65a together have an outer surface area 80a which is less than an outer surface area 82a of the upper sleeve portion 71a (Figure 6).

[0035] The upper sleeve portion 71a is formed about the floral grouping 48 in a manner like that described before and secured via a bonding material 72a (not shown) to provide a closed end 74a.

[0036] Changes may be made in the construction and the operation of the various components, elements and assemblies described herein and changes may be made in the steps or the sequence of steps of the methods described

herein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.